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ABSTRACT

The Dalton School, an independent, progressive school on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, was founded in 1919 by Helen Parkhurst. She established a child-centered school that attempted to incorporate the concept of a democratic community within the boundaries of an educational program. The school's innovative program became known as the Dalton Plan. This book, by a historian and former Dalton teacher, examines the transformation of the school from its inception to the present. It focuses on how each school head shaped and changed the school, in relation to the larger culture. During some periods of its history, the Dalton School was on the cutting edge of educational reform, and, during others, the school favored a traditional back-to-basics approach. The Dalton Plan is used as a yardstick to measure trends in progressive education in the larger world. Although the Dalton School is not the same school that Parkhurst founded, it continues to employ an educational program that recognizes the needs of a multicultural society and reconfirms the spirit of child-centered pedagogy as an important concern of the Dalton community. (LMI)

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